

Overview & Scrutiny Board - additional questions

Areas of questioning already identified:

1. The proposal to close Torquay and Brixham Connections was discussed at the Mayor's Executive Group on 9 July 2015 but the formal decision was not made until 28 July 2015. Why weren't members informed of the proposal between these dates?

Response from Cllr Haddock –

Sufficient time was required by Senior Customer Services officers to inform and discuss with Customer Services staff before the information became public knowledge.

Also, Cllr Haddock raised further queries to the Customer Services management which he needed answers to prior to the formal decision being published.

2. Which opposition members were informed? How?

Cllr Richard Haddock and Cllr Dave Morris to respond verbally

3. Can the figures in the table on page 12 be broken down between each of the three offices?

The breakdown of customer demand within the three Connections Offices over the last 5 years is approximately –

Torquay – 60% of total face to face demand

Paignton – 30% of total face to face demand

Brixham – 10% of total face to face demand

4. Is it possible to have a breakdown of the nature of those face-to-face enquiries by location?

As customers enter Torquay and Paignton Connections, they are signposted to the appropriate channel to resolve their enquiry.

The options are–

- Scanning of documents
- Submission of post
- Pre arranged appointment
- Quick enquiries resolved by "Channel Shifter"
- Self service on the website using a computer terminal
- Free phone to contact the Call Centre or other back office department
- Face to face enquiry with a Customer Service Advisor *

* Only the face to face enquiries are logged on the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) The CRM records the customers contact details and the reason for their visit, not the office that they visited to resolve their enquiry. Generally, customers visit the office nearest to their home address.

Face to face enquiries undertaken by a CSA's –

- Bus pass applications (This requires the CSA to take a photograph of the applicant)
- Purchasing of Parking Permits
- Sale of Radar keys
- Overseas Pension verification
- Vulnerable customers that require assistance where it is not appropriate for them to use

alternative service channels

At Brixham Connections all enquiries are dealt with by a CSA face to face as the operating model within the office has remained unchanged.

5. Can the figures in the table on page 16 be corrected as they don't currently add up? –

We have corrected the error in this table. However, whilst reviewing the data we have identified a shortfall in the Torquay figures and have amended the table to reflect this error. The amended totals do not exceed the capacity within PLAIC for the duration of the trial. (2400 per week)

6. What level of savings are expected to be achieved through the centralisation of Connections in one location?

There is the potential to save approximately £76k in the first year with further savings being made from year 2 in line with future demand.

7. What options appraisal has been undertaken?

The officer remit was to undertake the trial at PLAIC to collect data to contribute to the business case.

8. What guarantee is there that Torquay and Brixham Connections will re-open after the trial closure?

Richard Haddock to give assurance.

9. Can we have confirmation that any permanent closure of a Connections office will be a decision for the Council rather than the Executive?

Richard Haddock to respond – further advice is required from Monitoring Officer